

Message Text

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H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

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COME-00 AGR-01 OMB-01 STR-07 GSA-02 AID-05 XMB-02

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O R 021500Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8960

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT ZA

SUBJ: KAPWEWE AND NKUMBULA ANNOUNCE AS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

1. SUMMARY: FORMER UPP LEADER SIMON KAPWEPWE AND FORMER ANC LEADER HARRY NKUMBULA HAVE BOTH ANNOUNCED AS CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT OF ZAMBIA. NKUMBULA DID NOT INDICATE WHAT HIS PLATFORM WILL BE. KAPWEPWE HAS PRESENTED A FAIRLY DETAILED OUTLINE OF THE POLICIES HE WOULD PURSUE, INCLUDING SUPPORT FOR PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, A VIGOROUS AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM, A RE-OPENING OF THE RHODESIAN BORDER, AND TRADE WITH SOUTH AFRICA. HE EMPHASIZED CONCERN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RATHER THAN INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS. HE BLUNTLY AND DIRECTLY ATTACKED A WIDE RANGE OF CURRENT POLICIES. CONSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURES AND POLITICAL REALITIES WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT THE ODDS ARE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AGAINST HIS GETTING THE NOMINATION, DESPITE THE DISSATISFACTION WHICH EXISTS IN THE COUNTRY. END SUMMARY.

2. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN THE COPPERBELT TOWN OF NDOLA ON AUGUST 1, FORMER ZAMBIAN VICE PRESIDENT AND EX-LEADER OF THE NOW BANNED UNITED PROGRESSIVE PARTY (UPP) SIMON KAPWEPWE ANNOUNCED THAT HE INTENDS TO STAND AS CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT

OF THE UNITED NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE PARTY (UNIP) AND OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA. IN HIS PREPARED STATEMENT (POUCHED TO AF/S), KAPWEPWE SAID THAT DUE TO "NUMEROUS AND UNCOUNTABLE REQUESTS" HE HAD "RELUCTANTLY" DECIDED TO CHALLENGE PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S RENOMINATION AT UNIP'S GENERAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULED TO MEET IN EARLY SEPTEMBER. HE NOTED THAT KAUNDA ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS HAD SAID THAT HE WOULD WELCOME ANY CHALLENGER IN AN HONEST CONTEST.

3. THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED ZAMBIA DAILY MAIL OF AUGUST 2 ALSO REPORTS THAT HARRY NKUMBULA, FORMER LEADER OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC), IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE MAIL SAID THAT HE TOO HAS DECIDED TO CONTEST THE PRESIDENCY. THE SIXTY-FOUR-YEAR-OLD NKUMBULA SAID THAT HE WAS RESPONDING TO REQUESTS FROM ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY TO STAND AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE. NKUMBULA, WHO IS A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT KAUNDA HAD ALREADY BEEN SELECTED BY THE NATIONAL COUNCIL AS SOLE CANDIDATE BUT SAID HE HOPED THAT DELEGATES TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE WOULD BE GIVEN A CHANCE TO CHOOSE FROM CANDIDATES OTHER THAN KAUNDA. NKUMBULA'S REPORTED COMMENTS WERE SHORT ON ISSUES HE WOULD RAISE IN PURSUING HIS CANDIDACY.

4. KAPWEPWE RELEASED A DETAILED STATEMENT OUTLINING POLICIES AND PLANS FOR THE KIND OF GOVERNMENT HE WOULD LEAD IF ELECTED. ON ECONOMIC QUESTIONS, KAPWEPWE SAID THAT HE WOULD GIVE MAXIMUM SUPPORT TO PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, DENATIONALIZE UNPRO-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DUCTIVE PARASTATALS, PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PRIVATE AS WELL AS PUBLIC COMPANIES, WIPE OUT SHORTAGES AND INFLATION WITHIN TWO YEARS, AND PURSUE A VIGOROUS AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM. HE SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD "CONCENTRATE MORE ON ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION AND MUCH LESS ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICS," AND MAKE ZAMBIA'S OWN SELF-INTEREST THE ONLY CRITERIA FOR NATIONAL POLICY.

5. REFERRING TO ISSUES INVOLVING WHAT HE TERMED POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, KAPWEPWE VOWED TO DO AWAY WITH THE PRACTICE OF "VETTING" POLITICAL CANDIDATES BY PARTY OFFICIALS IN ORDER TO GIVE THE ELECTORATE A BROADER CHOICE AND PROMISED TO "DIVORCE POLITICS FROM ADMINISTRATION" BY INTRODUCING A SYSTEM OF CONSTITUTIONAL CHECKS AND BALANCES. HE SAID THAT TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY WOULD BE REVITALIZED AND MODERNIZED. KAPWEPWE PLEDGED HE WOULD MAKE BETTER AND MORE THOROUGH USE OF IMPORTED TECHNOLOGY AND EXPERTISE AND WOULD SYSTEMATIZE THE PROCESS OF ZAMBIANIZATION WITH THE ADVICE OF FOREIGN AND NATIONAL BUSINESS LEADERS.

6. IN A QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOLLOWING DELIVERY OF HIS PREPARED REMARKS, KAPWEPWE EXPANDED ON SOME OF THESE THEMES.

HE SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT HE WOULD SUPPORT THE ELIMINATION OF UNNECESSARY COSTS BY USING THE SHORTEST AND MOST EFFICIENT TRANSPORT ROUTES, INCLUDING RE-OPENING THE BORDER WITH RHODESIA AND OPENLY TRADING WITH SOUTH AFRICA DESPITE DISAGREEING WITH THE POLICIES OF THOSE REGIMES. HE CHARGED THAT THE CURRENT ECONOMIC DISTRESS IN ZAMBIA WAS DUE MORE TO POOR PLANNING AND "EXPENSIVE. . .ALMOST CRIMINAL MISTAKES," THAN TO THE FALL IN THE PRICE COPPER. KAPWEPWE SAID THE OPERATIONS OF ALL STATE-RUN ENTERPRISES WOULD BE THOROUGHLY EXAMINED, AND IF THEIR CONTINUED EXISTENCE WAS UNJUSTIFIED, THEY WOULD BE TURNED OVER TO PRIVATE CONTROL.

7. WHEN ASKED IF HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE PRINCIPLES OF THE OFFICIAL NATIONAL POLICY OF HUMANISM, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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KAPWEPWE REPLIED, "THE PHILOSOPHY DOES NOT MAKE SENSE TO ME. PROBABLY IT DOES TO SOME OTHER PEOPLE." HE SAID ZAMBIA WOULD

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EVENTUALLY BECOME A SOCIALIST STATE, BUT SHOULD FIRST FOLLOW THE CAPITALIST ROUTE "IN ORDER TO HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE AMONG THE PEOPLE." KAPWEPWE PLEDGED THAT HE WOULD HONOR THE OVERSEAS LOANS WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN MAKING AND THAT FURTHER PRIVATE INVESTMENT WOULD BE ENCOURAGED IN ORDER TO TAP ZAMBIA'S ABUNDANT NATURAL RESOURCES.

8. COMMENT: KAPWEPWE MANAGED TO ADDRESS BLUNTLY AND DIRECTLY EVERY MAJOR THEME AND MANY MINOR ONES WHICH RUN THROUGH THE COMMENTS AND CRITICISM OF THOSE ZAMBIANS WHO ARE UNHAPPY WITH THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS. THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS AND SPECULATION ABOUT KAPWEPWE'S PLANS SINCE HE FORMALLY RE-JOINED UNIP TEN MONTHS AGO. IN THAT SENSE THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS CANDIDACY WAS NOT EXACTLY A SURPRISE. MUCH OF THE INFORMED SPECULATION, HOWEVER, EVOLVED AROUND THE POSSIBILITY

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OF A DEAL BEING WORKED OUT BETWEEN KAPWEPWE AND KAUNDA IN WHICH THE FORMER WOULD BE GIVEN A TOP POST WITHIN THE PARTY AND GOVERNMENT (I.E., SECRETARY GENERAL OR PRIME MINISTER). THE NATURE OF KAPWEPWE'S REMARKS ATTACKING PRESENT POLICIES MAKE IT FAIRLY CLEAR THAT A DEAL, IF INDEED ONE WAS ATTEMPTED, HAS NOT BEEN ARRANGED.

9. WHILE IT IS CONSTITUTIONALLY POSSIBLE FOR KAPWEPWE TO CONTEST THE NOMINATION AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE, THE CARDS SEEM STACKED AGAINST HIM SUCCEEDING. THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURE (SEE LUSAKA A-26) FOR SELECTING THE SOLE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE PRESENTED TO THE GENERAL ELECTORATE GIVES THE PARTY LEADERSHIP A LARGE DEGREE OF CONTROL OVER THE PROCESS, AND THERE IS LITTLE TO INDICATE THAT A SIGNIFICANT SEGMENT OF CURRENT LEADERSHIP WILL BE AMENABLE TO ALLOWING A CHALLENGE TO KAUNDA. FURTHERMORE, THE COMPOSITION OF THE 5-6,000 DELEGATES TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE IS SUCH THAT THE INCUMBENT IS LIKELY TO COMMAND THE LOYALTY OF A SIZEABLE MAJORITY.

10. ASIDE FROM THESE PROBLEMS, KAPWEPWE IS STILL TAINTED WITH THE "TRIBALIST" BUSH, WITH THE BASE OF HIS SUPPORT BEING AMONG THE BEMBAS. ALTHOUGH HE HAS RAISED THE GRIEVANCES FELT BY ZAMBIANS OF ALL GROUPS, HIS IDENTIFICATION WITH ONE TRIBE AND REGION COULD BE STRONG ENOUGH TO SCARE OFF POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS. A MAJOR SOURCE OF KAUNDA'S POLITICAL STRENGTH HAS BEEN HIS ABILITY TO DRAW SUPPORT FROM ALL AREAS WITHOUT THE SPECTER OF POSSIBLE DOMINATION BY ANY ONE GROUP, AND THAT FACTOR SHOULD CONTINUE TO WEIGH HEAVILY ON MANY MINDS.

11. NKUMBULA HAS THE POTENTIAL TO DRAW SUPPORT FROM A

WIDER BASE THAN KAPWEPWE, BUT STILL IS IDENTIFIED MAINLY WITH THE TONGA IN THE SOUTH AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, THE LOZI AND LUNDA IN THE WEST. AS A PATRIARCH OF THE INDEPENDENCE MOVE-
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MENT, "OLD HARRY" CERTAINLY DEMANDS THE SENTIMENTAL LOYALTY OF MANY ZAMBIANS, BUT THAT MAY BE WANING IN THIS FOURTEENTH YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE. HE WOULD APPEAR TO POSE A LESS SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO KAUNDA THAN DOES KAPWEPWE, BUT HE COULD HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE BY INFLUENCING HIS SUPPORTERS TOWARD ONE OF THE OTHER TWO CONTENDERS.

12. THERE IS A SERIOUS DEGREE OF DISSATISFACTION IN THE ZAMBIAN BODY POLITIC, AND KAPWEPWE'S DIRECTNESS IN RAISING THE ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THE GENERAL ELECTORATE WILL MAKE FOR AN INTERESTING, AND POTENTIALLY DISTURBED, POLITICAL SEASON. HIS CANDIDACY COULD SERVE AS A RALLYING POINT FOR THE DISAFFECTION EVIDENT IN THE COUNTRY, AND SHOULD THAT DISAFFECTION BECOME VOCAL ENOUGH, THE GENERAL CONFERENCE MEETING AT MULUNGUSHI ROCK COULD BE DRAMATIC. AT THIS STAGE, HOWEVER, KAUNDA AND HIS LOYALISTS STILL APPEAR TO BE IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT. SHOULD THEY BECOME CONCERNED THAT KAPWEPWE'S CANDIDACY PRESENTS A SERIOUS THREAT, IT WOULD NOT BE IMPOSSIBLE TO SEE A REPEAT OF 1972 WHEN KAPWEPWE AND HIS KEY SUPPORTERS WERE PLACED IN DETENTION ON KAUNDA'S ORDERS.
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